

Boston, March 3, 1839.

Esteemed Friend:

Do not think that I lightly appreciate the invitation which has been given to me to visit Providence, for the purpose of that lecturing on slavery. It is both my desire and intention to comply with, invitation, with as little delay as convenient. And, truly, the anti-slavery cause in Rhode-Island needs a fresh impulse to carry it forward, or your last state will be worse than your first. Next to internal dissensions in our ranks, there is nothing I dread so much as a declension of zeal and a loss of vitality on the part of abolitionists. Two years ago, the politicians of your State stood in awe of the moral and political power of abolitionism: but what do they care for it now? The refusal of the R. I. Assembly to protest against that high-handed act of despotism, Atherton's gag-law, is a mournful, an alarming sign of the times — a baleful portent glaring ominously in our moral sky. It proves, conclusively, that the tone of public sentiment, not only in regard to southern slavery, but northern liberty, is changing for the worse, and that there has been a retrograde movement among you. If I come, therefore, (in imitation of an apostle,) "I will not spare," but will tell you the truth "in the love of it" — for, that I love the truth in no equivocal manner, my whole life shall testify. Your city anti-slavery society have passed some very spirited resolutions, condemnatory of Henry Clay's late weak and wicked speech. I wish they had been equally faithful in dealing with John Whipple, whose conduct in your General Assembly, respecting the anti-slavery petitions, deserves a stern public condemnation: it has stained his garments with blood. But in vain do we look to politicians for righteous examples; especially where the moral sense of the people is feeble, and selfishness has eaten out the heart of humanity.

But I will not reprove Rhode-Island too severely. Reformation, like charity, should begin at home. I must reserve some portion of my indignation, that I may have at least one vial to pour out upon Massachusetts. The Legislature of this State - now in session - I fear will do nothing to advance, but much to retard our holy enterprise. The committee on the subject of slavery in the District of Columbia have made a report, which is radically defective, and utterly contemptible; and they have the folly and impudence to suppose, that it will be satisfactory to the abolitionists! They shall be undeceived on this point without delay, I can assure them. Then, another report has been made on the petitions, praying for a repeal of all laws which proscribe and punish human beings on account of their color. It is satirical, profligate, and insulting, in the highest degree - worthy to have emanated from a gang of slaveholders, or a herd of lewd men: yet I have no doubt it will be adopted by the Legislature, without serious opposition. You see, therefore, that there is not much to choose between Massachusetts and Rhode-Island. "We are all gone out of the way, and have all become vile." In this great extremity of our enterprise, how soul-afflicting it is to think that jealousies, envyings, hatreds, divisions, abound in our ranks, and those who for years stood shoulder to shoulder in the "imminent deadly breach," forgetful of their political and religious variances, now refuse to "mingle like kindred drops into one"! The Lord is my witness, that, in seeking to undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free, I have never been unwilling to associate with any man, on any pretence whatever. It has been my aim, from the first, to endeavor to secure as many friends as possible, to assist in the deliverance of my poor fettered, guiltless countrymen from bondage - though some may say that I have taken a strange method to do this, in using so freely the language of denunciation and rebuke. Has not, however, my success been great? Let the fifteen hundred anti-slavery societies now in existence, and all the mighty machinery now in operation, answer.

All our abolition friends abroad will lament, and perhaps marvel at the division which now prevails in Massachusetts. They are not in a situation to judge correctly as to the real merits of the case. I know that there exists a deadly hostility to the Liberator in the breasts of many who are zealous in support of the new paper, and their determination is to destroy it, root and branch. That they will succeed, I have little doubt. The meagre patronage now given to the Liberator will be divided, and its circulation greatly curtailed. The paper is now sustained only by the donations of its friends. All the clergy being against it, (i.e. nearly all,) their opposition is tremendous. They will do what they can to substitute "The Abolitionist" in its stead. I am inclined to think, that the present year is to terminate the existence of the Liberator, at least as an anti-slavery journal. If its time has come, let it die: it has not lived in vain. It is declared to be worthy of death, because it advocates a perfect righteousness, and maintains that the followers of Christ are bound to imitate his example in the treatment of enemies! "The head and front of its offending hath this extent - no more."

Pres. Mahan, who has been preaching in the Marlboro' Chapel during the winter, has returned to Oberlin. He has created some sensation, though not so much as he would have done, had he forgotten the dogmas of the schools. He is emancipated, but not yet enfranchised. I heard his farewell discourse, and liked it exceedingly. It was high-toned, "ultra" "perfectionism" throughout, from the text, "Looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith." It contended for the necessity, the reasonableness, the duty of being perfect in holiness. My heart responded to almost every syllable that he uttered. How the audience could tolerate it, I do not know; but it seemed to me to be accompanied by the power and spirit of God, so that it could not be easily evaded in its application to the individual professor and the church. O, why should the doctrine of holiness be rejected, except there be unbelief in the heart? Surely, Christ is a whole Saviour - is he not?

I do not marvel that the only theme of Paul was, "Christ and him crucified." It is at this day, as it was in his own, a stone of stumbling, and foolishness - utter foolishness. But, to those who believe, it is "the power of God and the wisdom of God, unto salvation" - and salvation means, not simply a deliverance from the consequences of sin, but from sin itself. Let us "look to Jesus," at all times, and under all circumstances, and we shall be safe.

How dreadful, to a humane and pious mind, is the thought of a war between America and England, for an insignificant strip of territory! All religious and moral efforts would be at once paralyzed, and the spirit of the pit pervade the whole land. See with what eagerness and

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Miss Phoebe Jackson,

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unanimity the people of Maine are preparing for a fierce and bloody struggle! They have no fear of God before their eyes - and as for the Prince of Peace, they know him not, and will not have him to rule over them. Yet they are, to some extent, a pious people - make high pretensions to Christianity - have many churches - hire many clergymen to preach - and are very exact in observing rites, and ceremonies, and ordinances, and sacred days! Alas! is it not evident, that if the gospel had been preached in Maine as it was in primitive days, the war-spirit would have received, long ere this, a death-blow? But this nation is doomed to destruction, and the fire of God's wrath will consume it speedily.

Dear sister Mary is probably enjoying your society. At home, we are all favored with health. Helen and mother unite with me in tendering to your mother, yourself, and sister, cordial regards. I shall esteem it a privilege to hear from you and Mary soon. Yours, respectfully, Wm. Lloyd Garrison.